

FOOD4KIDS ONTARIO

WEEKENDS WITHOUT HUNGER PROGRAM

FINAL EVALUATION REPORT



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1 BACKGROUND

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Food4Kids' Weekends without Hunger program focuses on reducing hunger, addressing food insecurity and reducing the poverty rates of vulnerable populations, specifically single parents and children, newcomers, women, people with disabilities, and visible minorities. The program provides food to children identified as high-needs on weekends during the school year. During the summer, food is provided to these children and their families, along with recipes.

The Food4Kids program aims to create conditions in which children can learn effectively at school, improve their behaviour overall, and increase their confidence; parents, in turn, can have more time and energy to work or go back to school. In these ways, the program is intended to remove barriers to transitioning out of poverty.

This research is supported by the Local Poverty Reduction Strategy and will also be useful to Food4Kids staff as they plan potential future years of the program (or expanding to other sites). This final report presents the findings of the second year of the evaluation in detail, and offers a summary of the two-year evaluation period.

1.2. EVALUATION QUESTIONS & METHODOLOGY

The evaluation will answer the following questions:

Impact	1. To what extent are the short-term outcomes being achieved?
	2. How likely is it that the medium- and long-term outcomes will be achieved?
Process	3. How effective are existing partnerships at helping to make this program a success? How might partnerships be improved (or additional partnerships be developed) to increase program success?
	4. How effectively are high-needs children/families being identified and signed up for the program? How might this process be made more effective?
	5. How effective and efficient are current efforts to procure ingredients, prepare and pack meals, and deliver meals? How might these efforts be made more effective or efficient?
Learnings	6. What are considerations for replicating or scaling up this program in Ontario?

To help answer these questions, the evaluation analyzed findings from several sources:

- **Surveys of parents and students** who are involved in Weekends without Hunger, conducted by Food4Kids staff (in the second year of the evaluation, 158 parents completed the parent survey and 135 students completed the student survey)
- **Interviews with parents** who are involved in Weekends without Hunger, conducted by Food4Kids staff (in the second year of the evaluation, 15 total interviews)
- **Interviews with educators** who are involved in Weekends without Hunger, conducted by Cathexis (a total of 8 interviews)
- **Interviews with Food4Kids staff**, conducted by Cathexis (a total of 9 interviews with 8 members of staff from the Food4Kids regional offices, as well as the Executive Director of Food4Kids Ontario)
- **Interviews with Food4Kids partners** who are involved in Weekends without Hunger, conducted by Cathexis (a total of 8 interviews)
- A targeted **literature review** that explores the link between child hunger and school performance, development, and future life prospects

The data collection tools can be found in Appendices A and B.

1.3. LIMITATIONS

It is not possible to draw conclusions at this stage of the initiative about the long-term impact of the initiative (e.g., whether students who participate are more likely to graduate)

Survey and interview data were collected by Food4Kids staff, who are also responsible for delivering services to the children. Participants might have provided more favourable responses under these conditions.

In the second year of the evaluation, Food4Kids Waterloo did not participate in data collection. Surveys of parents and students, interviews with educators, interviews with parents, interviews with Food4Kids staff and volunteers, and interviews with partners took place with individuals from Hamilton, Halton, and Brant-Haldimand.

2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

2.1. OVERALL RESULTS

The families reached by Food4Kids are high needs and often face multiple barriers. Families are often headed by single parents, some parents and children face chronic health issues, and others have endured loss such as the death of a spouse/parent or loss of housing. All respondents reported being unable to afford sufficient food or healthy food without the help of Food4Kids.

Food4Kids is achieving its intended short-term outcomes, including reduced hunger and reduced stress for children as well as parents. Students are also demonstrating an improved ability to focus and learn at school, with some parents attributing improved grades to Food4Kids support. The evaluation has also found some unintended positive outcomes, including that families spend more time together cooking, that the variety of foods enriches the experience for families, and that students feel excited and cared for when they receive the food packages.

Parents expect that the Weekends without Hunger program will likely lead to their child's improved school performance over the long term. Parents have observed that the program has contributed to improvements in the physical and mental health of family members, including increased energy and ability to play and be active. Some educators agreed, noting that students appeared more ready to learn on Monday mornings.

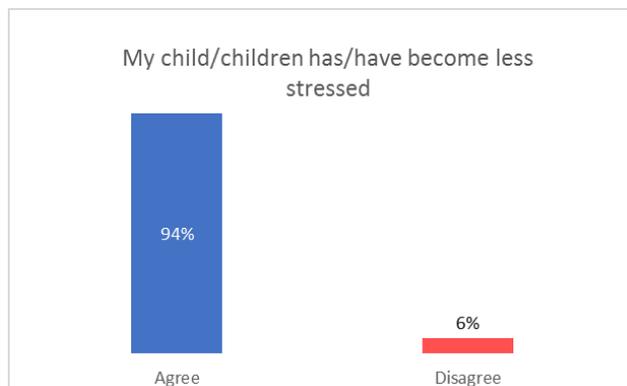
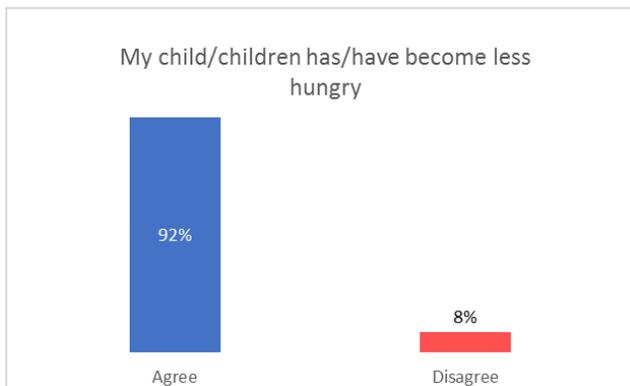
All families interviewed have found the process of signing up with Food4Kids to be easy, with some commenting that it protected their privacy and dignity. The food was universally agreed to be healthy, appropriate, and delivered at convenient times. Parents appreciated the reliability of Food4Kids especially, noting that they know they can count on the food no matter what. Schools and other partners in the community unanimously described Food4Kids as easy to work with, responsive, and flexible.

2.2. TO WHAT EXTENT ARE THE SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES BEING ACHIEVED?

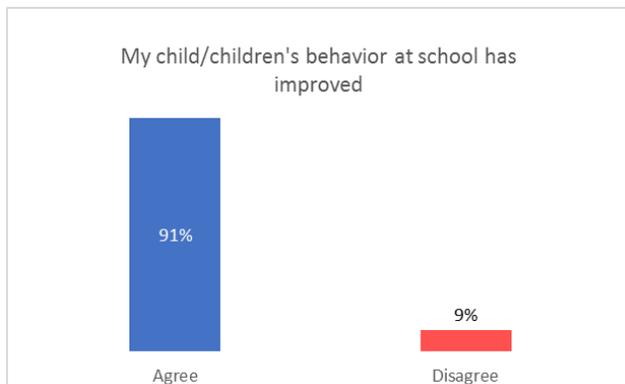
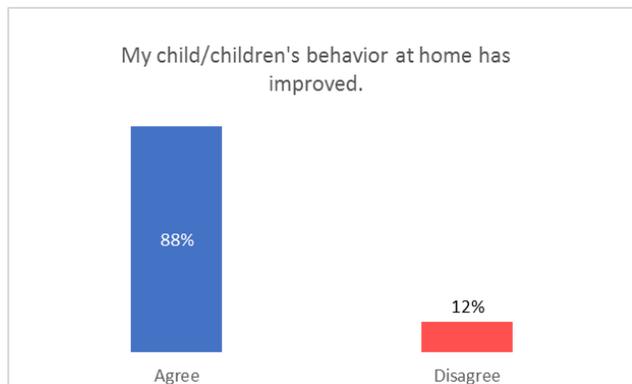
Key findings:

- Parents agreed in surveys and interviews that their children have become less hungry since becoming involved in the Food4Kids program. Educators also noted less hunger in students.
- Parents also reported that their children are less stressed, that their behavior both at home and at school has improved, and that they are better able to focus and learn at school. Educators often weren't in a position to comment on individual students' behavior, but did note that students appeared less stressed.
- Parents are more confident, feel more connected to their community, and say they spend less time and energy on feeding their children.
- Students themselves are feeling better and are better able to focus and learn more at school since becoming involved with Food4Kids.

Parents who were surveyed, and those interviewed, said their children experience less hunger (92%) and stress (94%) than they did before becoming involved with the Weekends without Hunger program. One parent noted, “We need this food. It’s not just nice to have, we need it. If we do not have it, we will go without food. We have done it before.” Another parent noted that they “immediately” noticed the change in their daughter after starting the program, explaining, “She had been so sad and distant. She was excited to see the food she would get. It was nice to see her happy and to smile. I had not seen that in a while.” One educator explained that they noticed “a little bit less apprehension when the kids see the bag on Fridays – they know they’re going to be okay for the weekend.”



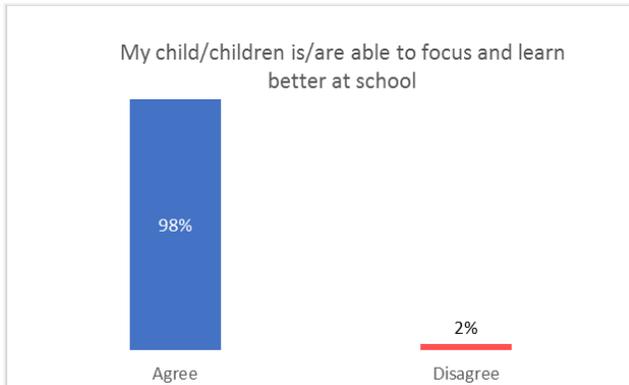
Parents also reported seeing an improvement in their children’s behavior, both at home (88%) and at school (91%). Sixty-seven percent of parents interviewed described an increase in their child’s energy levels, and 27 percent described an improvement in their child’s overall health. One parent interviewed observed that their child was “able to play longer outside without getting tired or having episodes of negative behavior or conflict with peers.” One educator observed that involvement with Weekends with Hunger “helps with some behaviors. You often see kids with behaviors that ramp up at the end of the week or over a holiday because they know they’re not going to have enough food.”



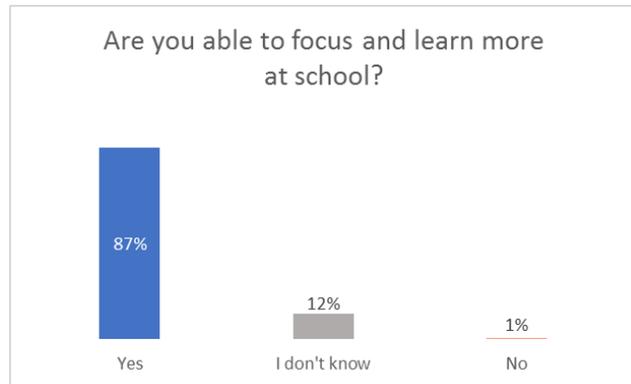
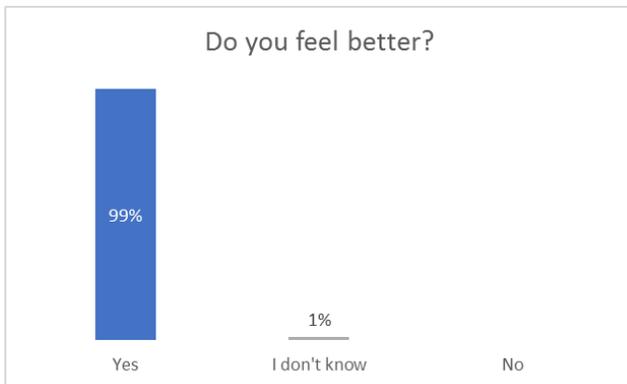
Surveyed parents overwhelmingly agreed that their children were better able to focus and learn at school (98%).

When asked about impacts or changes they’ve noticed in their children, 33 percent of parents interviewed noted an improvement in behavior at home or at school, and 60 percent noted that their child had an

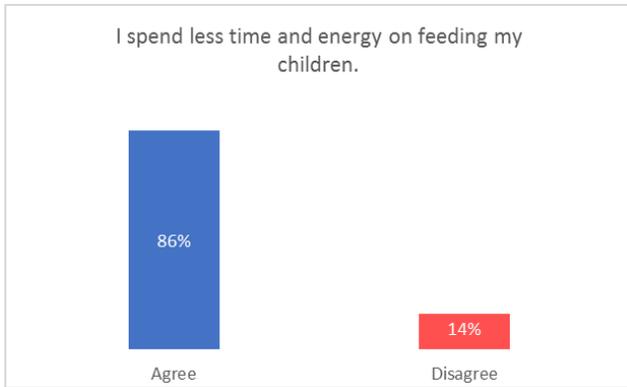
increased ability to focus or learn at school. One parent noted that they have seen a notable change in their child’s grades during their participation in Food4Kids, and explained that they have personal experience of going to school hungry (and therefore an understanding of the effect hunger has on attendance and academic success).



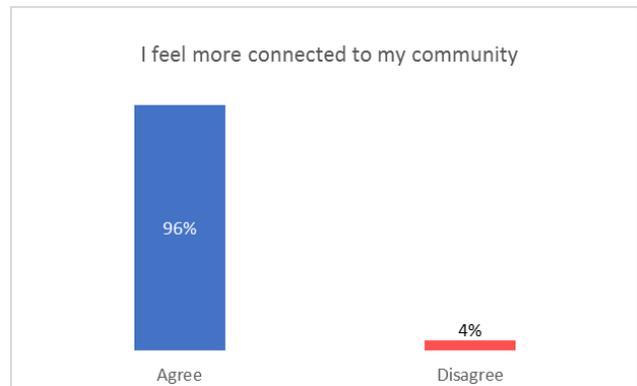
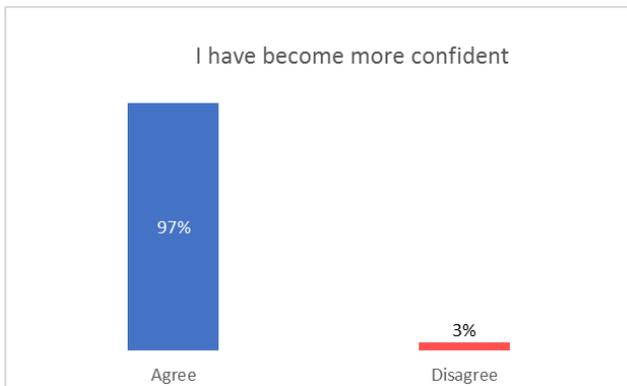
Students agreed, noting that they feel better (99%) and are better able to focus and learn at school (87%) since becoming involved with Food4Kids.



Parents also noted a change within themselves since becoming part of the program. The majority of parents surveyed (86%) agreed that they spend less time and energy feeding their children, an observation that was shared with interviewees (47%). One parent explained that they felt the biggest impact of Weekends without Hunger, noting that their stress levels had reduced dramatically and that they felt more open to accessing services in the future (due to the positivity of the Food4Kids experience). Another noted, “It’s huge. I feel like a weight has been lifted off my shoulders.”



Parents also reported becoming more confident (97%) and feeling more connected to their community (96%). One parent described receiving supports after the death of their spouse and the loss of their home, explaining “(Food4Kids) have been the only ones who cared enough to help us in so many ways.” Parents described being part of the program as having “increased a sense of community belonging.” In some regions, parents have the option to pick up the food during the summer, and two parents noted that it gave them a reason to get out of the house and meet people.



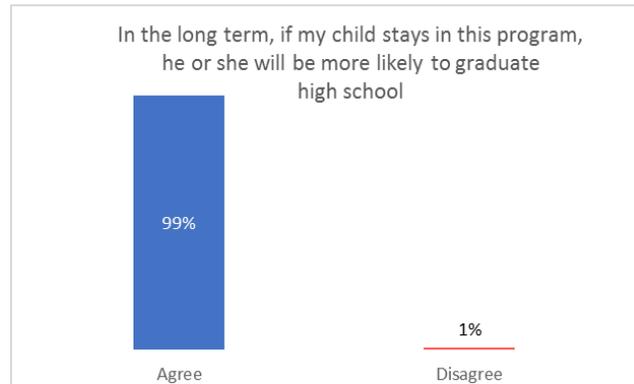
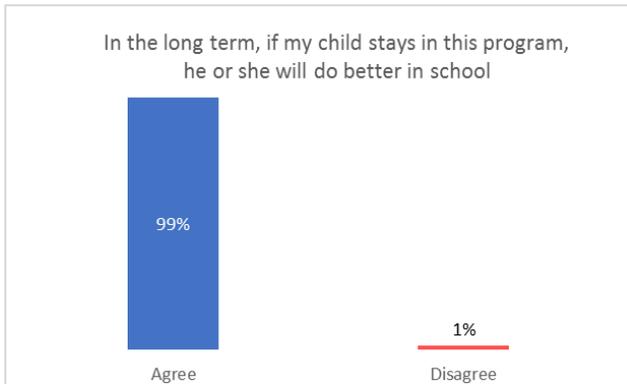
The literature confirms that poverty and hunger have a debilitating impact on children; hungry students are less able to concentrate in school, and do not perform as well (Kleinman et al. 2002). Food insecurity and insufficiency can affect how children develop physically, mentally, and emotionally (Jyoti et al. 2005), and can lead to decreased school attendance, which further affects school performance and achievement (Michael et al. 2015).

2.3. HOW LIKELY IS IT THAT THE MEDIUM- AND LONG-TERM OUTCOMES WILL BE ACHIEVED?

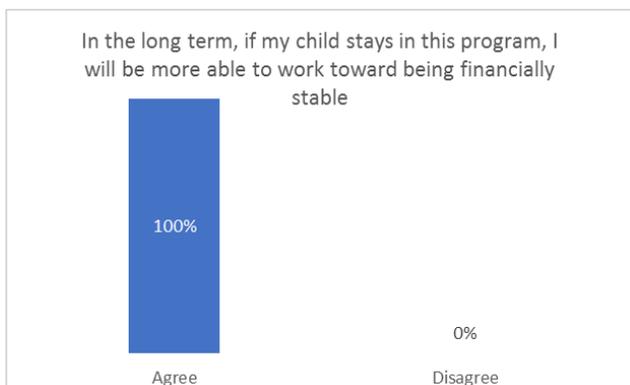
Key findings:

- Parents and some educators agree that if their children stay in the Weekends without Hunger Program, they will perform better in school and be more likely to graduate high school.
- Surveyed parents unanimously felt that staying involved with Food4Kids would help them work toward being financially stable; some interviewees also noted an increased ability to work, go back to school, or pursue some other activity that will help them to work toward financial stability.
- Most parents interviewed noted that their families’ physical and mental health was positively impacted by the program.

Parents were nearly unanimous (99%) in agreeing that being part of Weekends without Hunger would lead to improved school performance (potentially including increased high school graduation rates) in the long term. One parent explained, “I think they do better in school (now that they are in the program). The oldest will graduate, and I did not think he would. If he graduates, I think the other kids will as well.” Some educators agreed, with one explaining, “You can tell when they walk through the door if they haven’t eaten well – they are less focused. This allows them to be kids, to focus on school.”



Parents also noted that, through being involved with Food4Kids, they were in a better position to move out of poverty, due to being less stressed, more healthy, and having more time to devote to other activities. Parents felt that Weekends without Hunger helps create some space in their budgets, whether that is to save some money or to be able to afford other essentials, enabling them to spend money on other necessary bills or items. One parent noted, “It leaves money so that if something comes up, like an oil change to the car, I can have it done. If I can’t get to work, we would be in real trouble.”



The literature confirms that chronic malnutrition negatively impacts brain development (Prado and Dewey 2014), and that low performance in school (including not graduating high school) can lead to a higher risk of poverty in adulthood (Statistics Canada 2009).

For parents, not being able to sufficiently feed their children can cause significant stress, making it more difficult to focus on tasks or activities needed to become financially stable or move out of poverty; this is one way that poverty can be self-perpetuating, an effect known as the ‘poverty trap’ or cycle of poverty (Marger 2008; Azariadis 2006; Persson and Tabellini 1994).

One parent interviewed described losing sleep previously due to stress about feeding their family, and noted that Weekends without Hunger has greatly reduced this stress. They reported a boost in confidence due to being better able to provide for their family. Another parent explained, “Having that bit of help is enormous... It has changed my life so much.”

2.4. HOW EFFECTIVE ARE EXISTING PARTNERSHIPS AT HELPING TO MAKE THIS PROGRAM A SUCCESS? HOW MIGHT PARTNERSHIPS BE IMPROVED (OR ADDITIONAL PARTNERSHIPS BE DEVELOPED) TO INCREASE PROGRAM SUCCESS?

Key findings:

- Existing partners agree that Food4Kids is a good partner to work with, meaning that they maintain relationships, demonstrate gratitude, are well-organized, and generate enthusiasm among volunteers and donors.
- Interviews with staff revealed that Food4Kids regional offices have utilized and are pursuing a number of unique fundraising opportunities and potential donors.
- Food4Kids staff report operating at maximum capacity and described feeling that there is always more they could be doing if they had access to more funding/staff time. Staff are passionate about the impact Food4Kids has in their communities.

Interviews with partners revealed that Food4Kids is regarded as a great organization to partner with. One partner, who has acted as a donor and has had members volunteer, described Food4Kids as “the pinnacle of the relationships we have with other organizations”, noting “they treat us so well” and commenting that they wished other organizations could be like Food4Kids. They explained, “Food4Kids have set the standard for how to treat their volunteers and supporters.” Another partner commented, “We work with them because they believe in it so strongly, they’re open to new ideas, they’re humble and thankful.”

Partners noted that they appreciate knowing that Food4Kids is investing in their community and that they have a low overhead. Partners also mentioned that they feel they get an appropriate amount of recognition for their involvement, a key incentive for some corporate partners.

Staff interviewed described being deeply involved in the community, often attending regular meetings for service clubs, local chambers of commerce, and local food security boards. Partnerships were usually described as sustained, rather than one-time donations. Innovative partnerships or fundraising events that Food4Kids has pursued include:

- Dress down days (for corporate partners)
- Annual craft beer festival
- Calendar sales
- High school fundraising
- Local sports teams
- Real estate teams
- Fitness fundraisers
- Battle of the Chefs
- Bequests
- Volunteer grocery shoppers who are ‘activated’ when a staple item goes on sale

Only one Food4Kids regional office described having trouble finding enough volunteers. This may be due to the relative newness of the particular branch; other branches noted that they have not had a lack of volunteers, with one explaining that they have a waitlist of volunteers.

Food4Kids staff also reported having good relationships with schools and school boards. One staff member explained that if they were invited to the principals’ meeting at the beginning of the school year, a short presentation could help to disseminate information all at once (rather than speaking to each principal individually) and would generate more awareness. This may be an efficient way to save time and raise awareness.

Staff did note feeling that there was always more they could be doing to build partnerships, but that they were operating at capacity and didn’t feel that they had the time or resources. One staff member described working as a volunteer for a year due to a grant falling through. Food4Kids Ontario is currently in the process of standardizing some marketing tools so that the regional offices are able to save time and money in branding and building community awareness. One staff member noted that they are acting alone in designing menus and finding and adapting recipes; this may be another opportunity for Food4Kids Ontario to offer some standardized options in order to save time for the regional offices.

2.5. HOW EFFECTIVELY ARE HIGH-NEEDS CHILDREN/FAMILIES BEING IDENTIFIED AND SIGNED UP FOR THE PROGRAM? HOW MIGHT THIS PROCESS BE MADE MORE EFFECTIVE?

Key findings:

- Families who are involved with Food4Kids are high-needs and often face multiple barriers. All parents interviewed described not being able to afford enough food, or high-quality/healthy food.
- Educators agree that the most high-needs families in their schools are being reached, but many reported having more students they would recommend if there were more space in the program

Parents described facing many barriers, including being able afford adequate food for their children and themselves. Eight parents interviewed identified themselves as single parents, and two identified their children as having multiple chronic health issues. All parents interviewed agreed that their family would be deeply distressed if they were to stop receiving food through Weekends without Hunger. One parent noted that without Food4Kids, “We would be short on food about two days each week. I eat less as it is, and I too would have less food.” Another explained, “Unless you have been without food, you don’t know how many parts of your life it affects, including independence, sense of responsibility, confidence, and self-worth, energy, and creativity.”

All parents interviewed described signing up with Food4Kids as an easy process, with many noting that they appreciated how quickly the program started. One explained that the process was “simple, easy, and positive” and that the deliveries started immediately. They noted, “I’m very grateful for the program. The first three bags were like Christmas. It’s like getting presents every Friday.”

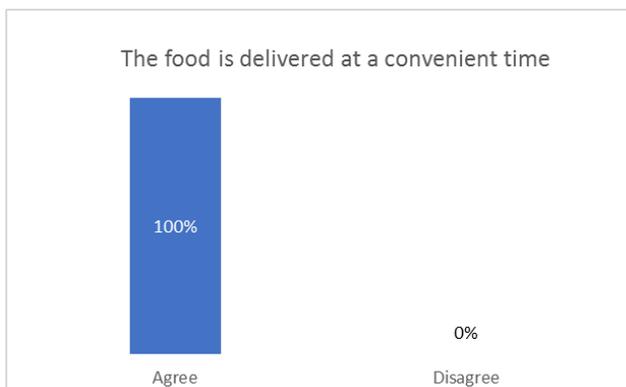
Educators agree that the most high-needs children and families are being identified and reached by the program, but pointed out barriers such as parents declining involvement, language barriers, parents never receiving the letters (due to carelessness of students), and the fact that identifying high-needs children can take significant time. Educators also noted that while they are capturing the highest-need families, they have other students they would like to recommend to Food4Kids if there were room for them. As one educator explained, “We always have more, but we know there are only so many that they can provide for.”

2.6. HOW EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT ARE CURRENT EFFORTS TO PROCURE INGREDIENTS, PREPARE AND PACK MEALS, AND DELIVER MEALS? HOW MIGHT THESE EFFORTS BE MADE MORE EFFECTIVE OR EFFICIENT?

Key findings:

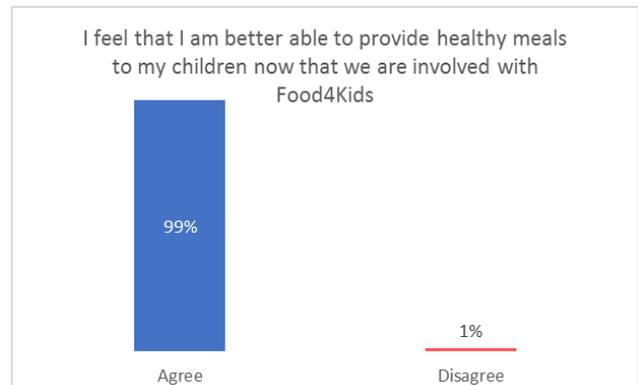
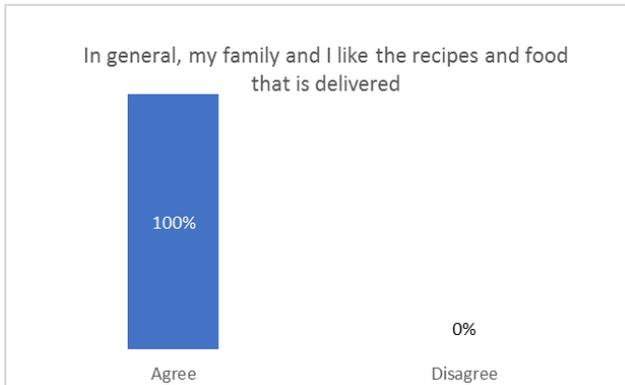
- Parents agreed universally that the food was delivered at a convenient time, that the food itself is culturally appropriate and accommodates any allergies, and that the meals and food are healthy.
- Food4Kids has largely perfected its systems, such as food procurement, packing, and delivery. Newer regional offices struggle a bit more, but have also developed efficient systems.

Parents were unanimous in feeling that the food delivery was convenient and easy for them, with many parents interviewed noting that they got along well with the volunteers and staff. One parent observed, “Every volunteer we have had has been friendly and nice... They help unpack and this lets me get to know them better. Helping unpack makes me feel better about myself, and they have never made me feel ashamed of needing Food4Kids.”



Parents described enjoying the food and spending some time cooking together and bonding, with many noting that their children were more open to trying new foods that were delivered as part of Weekends without Hunger than they might be otherwise. Parents also noted that some items, especially dairy and fresh produce, were not items they could normally afford, and were especially grateful to have them included in the food received. As one parent explained, “I am thankful we receive milk, cheese, and yogurt. We receive a lot of fruits and vegetables, a lot more than I could provide on my budget.”

Many parents noted that their children were excited to open the bags and see what the food for that week was, with one noting, “My daughter gets excited when food comes home from Food4Kids. She looks forward to it.” Another parent explained that their children are more engaged when eating and preparing meals, and that their family is able to have more positive interactions around meal times.



Food4Kids staff agree that the process by which food is procured and packed is efficient. The scale of the program influences the most efficient way to procure food – smaller programs order from a grocery store and pick up the groceries themselves, whereas the largest regional office has two regular suppliers that deliver, as well as a volunteer team that can be called upon to take advantage of deep discounts at grocery stores. One staff member suggested that the disparate regional offices band together, in order to have greater purchasing power, and approach a retailer local across Ontario. They argued that even if they only received a discount on ten items, it would make a big difference to the program costs, especially for larger operations.

Food4Kids staff and educators agree that the food delivery process is also efficient, though one region is currently struggling with filling spots for volunteer drivers. This may be due to the geographic spread of the region – two schools are located nearly an hour away from the volunteer base. It may also be a factor of being a relatively new regional office and still becoming established in the community.

Schools appreciate that Food4Kids deliveries are consistent and can be flexible as needed. One educator noted it would be helpful if Food4Kids packed any items that need to be refrigerated separately and distinctly, so that they wouldn't forget to set these items aside.

2.7 WHAT ARE CONSIDERATIONS FOR REPLICATING OR SCALING UP THIS PROGRAM IN ONTARIO?

Key findings:

- Partners, educators, and Food4Kids staff agreed unanimously that Food4Kids works in their communities.
- Partners, educators, and Food4Kids staff largely agreed that any and all communities could benefit from Weekends without Hunger, though some noted that community support is essential to the success of the program.
- Food4Kids staff noted that while the program model is relatively simple, the amount of work needed to build relationships in the community and get the program running is immense. As such, it is not realistic for the program to be run part-time.

Educators, partners, and Food4Kids staff interviewed all agreed that Food4Kids works well in their communities. One educator noted, “There is definitely an excitement on Fridays, when they know they get to take their food home. That’s a nice thing to see, because often Fridays are rough because they know they’re going home to a tough situation. That Friday food bag is a highlight for them.” Partners agree that Food4Kids is able to leverage the generosity of the community well in order to fill gaps, with one partner noting, “The community didn’t even really know about (child hunger) until (the founder) stumbled upon it... The numbers now demonstrate just how much of an issue this was... People who don’t have those issues don’t realize how difficult it is to get through the weekend.”

Educators noted that schools in all types of communities have need for a program like Weekends without Hunger, with one explaining, “I think any community could benefit. Even in schools where everything looks beautiful, there are always one or two families where you would never guess, but they are living in their car or trying to make ends meet.” Food4Kids staff agreed, with one staff member noting, “There is always a mix of needs in any community.”

Food4Kids staff also explained that while there is need in every community, replicating the program is an immense task. Staff described needing to constantly be in the community, raising the profile of Food4Kids and stewarding relationships, as well as ensuring that volunteers have a good experience so they will return. As one staff member explained, “Outreach really affects eagerness to volunteer, funding... The more you’re out (in the community), the more support you get. In the first two years, it is absolutely critical to be out in the community as much as possible.”

Food4Kids Ontario is working to make replicating the program a more efficient and streamlined process. For example, a Food4Kids start-up toolkit was recently developed and used successfully in Niagara region when starting a Food4Kids regional office. It is worth noting that during the course of this evaluation, regional Food4Kids offices opened in Niagara, Guelph, and Mississauga, for a total of seven regional offices in Ontario.

As mentioned previously, Food4Kids Ontario is also working to develop a suite of standardized communications tools and branding, so that regional offices will all be able to use the same materials.

2.8 EMERGENT THEMES

Some additional positive outcomes for children and their families emerged, over and above the intended outcomes of the initiative:

- The **individual snacks provided were highly appreciated. Some parents felt that it fostered independence** among their children, since they could get the snacks themselves.
- **The food made some families/kids feel cared for or special.**
- **Parents and children appreciated the variety of foods offered.** Parents explained that the novelty of trying new foods was very important in the overall experience, and that they and their children loved having foods they wouldn’t or couldn’t ordinarily purchase. Even for picky eaters, the opportunity to try new foods (without the added pressure of having spent limited funds on them) was greatly appreciated.

- **Receiving ingredients/recipes in the summer has led to spending more time together as a family in the kitchen**, as they are preparing food together and buying less prepared food. The increased time spent together was reported to be very valuable. **The recipes also led some parents to regain an interest in cooking**, which was a highlight of the week for some interviewees.

2.9 SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Feedback on the Weekends without Hunger program was overwhelmingly positive. Some suggestions for improvement were made, however, and are included below.

Parents suggested:

- Including **coupons or information about food banks and other services** in the food bags
- Include **milk vouchers** in the food bags
- In regions that only provide Weekends without Hunger for elementary school students, **extend the service beyond elementary school**
- Include **even more recipes**, as they are highly valued

Staff suggested:

- Uniting regional Food4Kids offices in order to **leverage greater purchasing power**
- **Food4Kids Ontario providing recipes** and menu plans for regional offices to use in their planning

3 APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRES

Questionnaire for parents

For the following questions, you can answer agree, disagree, or prefer not to answer:

1. My child/children has/have become less hungry.
2. My child/children has/have become less stressed.
3. My child/children's behavior at school has improved.
4. My child/children's behavior at home has improved
5. My child/children is/are able to focus and learn better at school.
6. In the long term, if my child stays in this program, he or she will do better in school.
7. In the long term, if my child stays in this program, he or she will be more likely to graduate high school.
8. The food is delivered at a convenient time.
9. In general, my family and I like the recipes and food that is delivered.
10. I have become more confident.
11. I feel more connected to my community.
12. I spend less time and energy on feeding my children.
13. I feel that I am better able to provide healthy meals to my children now that we are involved with Food4Kids.
14. In the long term, if my child stays in this program, I will be more able to work toward being financially stable.

Questionnaire for children

For each question, you can answer yes, no, or I don't know.

Now that you're getting meals from Food4Kids:

1. Do you feel better?
2. Are you able to focus and learn more at school?

4 APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDES

4.1 INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARENTS

Introduction

We are working with a company in Toronto, Cathexis Consulting, to see how well the Weekends without Hunger program is working, and to find out how to make it even better. As part of this, we're asking parents who have participated in the program to take part in an interview. The interview will ask about your thoughts about the Weekends without Hunger program, how it has helped you or your family, and how it could be made better.

Consent

Before agreeing to take part in the interview, you should know that:

- It is completely up to you whether to participate or not.
- If you decide not to participate, that is okay. You'll still receive exactly the same services from Food4Kids.
- If you decide to participate, you can say whatever you want, positive or negative. No one other than Food4Kids and Cathexis Consulting will see what you've said. No one other than Food4Kids will know your name. Your name won't be included in any reports.
- You can change your mind about participating at any point, even after the interview has started.

If you have any questions, you are welcome to contact:

Lianne Picot, Executive Director
Food4Kids Ontario
407 Whitney Ave, Hamilton, ON L8S 2H6
lianne@food4kids.ca
(647) 627-3544

Megan McGinnis-Dunphy
Cathexis Consulting Inc.
34 Park Road, Toronto ON M4W 2N4
megan@cathexisconsulting.ca
416-469-9954, ext. 233

Are you willing to participate in this interview and have the answers included in the evaluation reporting?

Yes – *proceed with interview*

No – *explore what would be required in order to proceed. Do not interview without explicit consent.*

Interviewee information

Name:

Notes (length of time involved, one on one vs. group format participation, etc.):

Date:

Interviewer:

Interview questions

1. Tell me a bit about your child/children.
2. Tell me about your involvement with Food4Kids. (Eval Q 4)
3. What changes or impacts have you noticed in your child/children since becoming involved with Food4Kids? (Eval Q 1) (*Probes: Less hungry; less stressed; improved behavior at school; improved behaviour at home; increased ability to concentrate and learn at school*)
 - Can you tell me more about that? (*Probe: Can you give me an example of what made you notice this change? How big a change was this? Has there been anything else in your child's life that could have contributed to this change?*)
4. If this program stopped being offered at your school, how would this affect your child/ren and your family?
5. If your child/children is/are involved in this program long term, do you think he/she/they will do better in school, or will be more likely to graduate high school? (Eval Q 2)
6. What changes or impacts have you noticed in yourself since becoming involved with Food4Kids? (Eval Q 1) (*Probes: Less time and energy spent on feeding your child/children; increased confidence; decreased sense of social isolation*)
7. In the long run, do you think being involved with Food4Kids may make it easier for you to achieve goals that will help your family to be more financially stable? (Eval Q 2) (*Increased ability to work; increased ability to go back to school; enhanced physical and mental health/well-being for the whole family*)
8. What did you think of the process of being signed up by Food4Kids? Are there ways this process could be improved? (Eval Q 4)
9. What do you think of the food delivery process itself? Is it delivered at a convenient time? Are there ways this could be improved? (Eval Q 5)
10. In general, do you like the recipes and food that is delivered? Do you feel that it is healthy? Does it fit with any allergies or food restrictions your family may have? (Eval Q 5)
11. Do you feel that you are better able to provide healthy meals to your child/children now that you have been involved with Food4Kids? (Eval Q 5)
12. Do you have any other ideas for how to improve the supports you receive from Food4Kids? Is there anything you particularly like?
13. Are there any supports that would be helpful for you that you are not currently receiving?
14. Is there anything else you would like to tell me?

4.2 INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS

Introduction

Cathexis Consulting Inc is working with Food4Kids to evaluate the Weekends without Hunger project. The evaluation will focus on examining and reporting on the overall impact of the program and how it might be improved. As part of the process, we are inviting educators in schools that have participated in the program to participate in an interview. These interviews ask about your thoughts on the impact this program has on participants.

Consent

Before agreeing to participate in the interview, you should know that:

- Participation is voluntary. Your decision to participate or not to participate will have no impact on your relationship with Food4Kids. You may decide to withdraw at any point.
- Personal information, including names, will not be used in any reports; responses to this interview will be reported at the aggregate level.

If you have any questions about the evaluation that the interviewer was not able to answer, you are welcome to contact:

Lena Bassford, Executive Director

Megan McGinnis-Dunphy

Cathexis Consulting Inc.

34 Park Road, Toronto ON M4W 2N4

megan@cathexisconsulting.ca

416-469-9954, ext. 233

Are you willing to participate in this interview and have the answers included in the evaluation reporting?

Yes – *proceed with interview*

No – *explore what would be required in order to proceed. Do not interview without explicit consent.*

Do you mind if I record this interview for my own notes? Y/N

Interviewee Information

Name:

School:

Role:

Date:

Interviewer:

Interview Questions

1. Tell me about how you've been involved with Weekends without Hunger in your school?
2. What changes or impacts have you noticed in students involved with Food4Kids since they became involved? (Eval Q 1)
 - **Probes:**
 - *Less hungry*
 - *Less stressed*
 - *Improved behavior at school*
 - *Increased ability to concentrate and learn at school*
3. Do you think, if these children are involved in this program long term, they will experience improved school performance, or will be more likely to graduate high school? (Eval Q 2)
4. Do you think that Food4Kids is reaching the highest-need families in your school? If not, why not? (Eval Q 4)
5. What are the challenges of reaching high-needs families? Could Food4Kids coverage of high-needs families in the community be improved? (Eval Q 4)
6. What do you think of the food delivery system used by Food4Kids? Could it be improved? How? (Eval Q 5)
7. Do you think Weekends without Hunger works in your community? If so, why? If it doesn't, why not? (Eval Q 6)
8. Do you think other communities could benefit from Weekends without Hunger? What kinds of communities? (Eval Q 6)

Is there anything else you would like to tell me?

4.3 INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR FOOD4KIDS PARTNERS

Introduction

Cathexis Consulting Inc is working with Food4Kids to evaluate the Weekends without Hunger program. The evaluation is examining the overall impact of the program and how it might be improved. As part of the process, we are inviting partners that have worked with Food4Kids to share their thoughts in an interview.

Consent

Before agreeing to participate in the interview, you should know that:

- Participation is voluntary. Your decision to participate or not to participate will have no impact on your relationship with Food4Kids. You may decide to withdraw at any point.
- We will not share these interview notes with anyone beyond the evaluation team. Personal information, including names, will not be used in any reports; responses to this interview will be reported at the aggregate level. However, because we are interviewing only a small number of individuals, and some individuals have unique roles, we cannot guarantee total anonymity.

If you have any questions about the evaluation that the interviewer was not able to answer, you are welcome to contact:

Lena Bassford, Executive Director

Food4Kids Ontario

405 Whitney Ave, Hamilton, ON L8S 2H6

lena@food4kids.ca

(905) 741-0060

Megan McGinnis-Dunphy

Cathexis Consulting Inc.

121 Bloor St E, Ste 425, Toronto M4W 3M5

megan@cathexisconsulting.ca

416-469-9954, ext. 233

Are you willing to participate in this interview and have the answers included in the evaluation reporting?

___ Yes – *proceed with interview*

___ No – *explore what would be required in order to proceed. Do not interview without explicit consent.*

Do you mind if I record this interview for my own notes? Y/N

Interviewee information

Name:

Organization and Role:

Date:

Interviewer:

Interview questions

1. Tell me a bit about your organization and role.
2. Tell me about your involvement with Weekends without Hunger, or Food4Kids more generally.
3. What do you think about your organization's existing relationship with Food4Kids? Could it be improved, or are there other ways Food4Kids could leverage the relationship?
4. Do you have any suggestions for other organizations Food4Kids could partner with?
5. Do you think Weekends without Hunger works in your community? Why or why not?
6. Do you think other communities could benefit from Weekends without Hunger? What kinds of communities?
7. Is there anything else you would like to tell me?

4.4 INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR FOOD4KIDS STAFF/VOLUNTEERS

Introduction

Cathexis Consulting Inc is working with Food4Kids to evaluate the Weekends without Hunger project. The evaluation will focus on examining and reporting on the overall impact of the program and how it might be improved. As part of the process, we are inviting Food4Kids staff and volunteers that have participated in the program to participate in an interview. These interviews ask about your thoughts on the impact this program has on participants.

Consent

Before agreeing to participate in the interview, you should know that:

- Participation is voluntary. Your decision to participate or not to participate will have no impact on your relationship with Food4Kids. You may decide to withdraw at any point.
- Personal information, including names, will not be used in any reports; responses to this interview will be reported at the aggregate level.

If you have any questions about the evaluation that the interviewer was not able to answer, you are welcome to contact:

Lena Bassford, Executive Director

Food4Kids Ontario

405 Whitney Ave, Hamilton, ON L8S 2H6

lena@food4kids.ca

(905) 741-0060

Megan McGinnis-Dunphy

Cathexis Consulting Inc.

34 Park Road, Toronto ON M4W 2N4

megan@cathexisconsulting.ca

416-469-9954, ext. 233

Are you willing to participate in this interview and have the answers included in the evaluation reporting?

Yes – *proceed with interview*

No – *explore what would be required in order to proceed. Do not interview without explicit consent.*

Do you mind if I record this interview for my own notes? Y/N

Interviewee Information

Name:

Role:

Date:

Interviewer:

Interview Questions

1. Tell me about your involvement with Weekends without Hunger.
2. What do you think about the existing partnerships Food4Kids has (school boards, food banks, service clubs, businesses, etc.)? (Eval Q 3)
3. Could the existing partnerships be improved? Or do you think new partnerships should be pursued? (Eval Q 3)
4. What do you think of the practical components of the program, such as shopping for ingredients, preparing the food and packing it? Is it cost-effective? (Eval Q 5)
5. What do you think of the food delivery system used by Food4Kids? Could it be improved? How? (Eval Q 5)
6. Do you think Weekends without Hunger works in your community? If so, why? If it doesn't, why not? (Eval Q 7)
7. Do you think other communities could benefit from Weekends without Hunger? What kinds of communities? (Eval Q 7)
8. Is there anything else you would like to tell me?

5 APPENDIX C: REFERENCES

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